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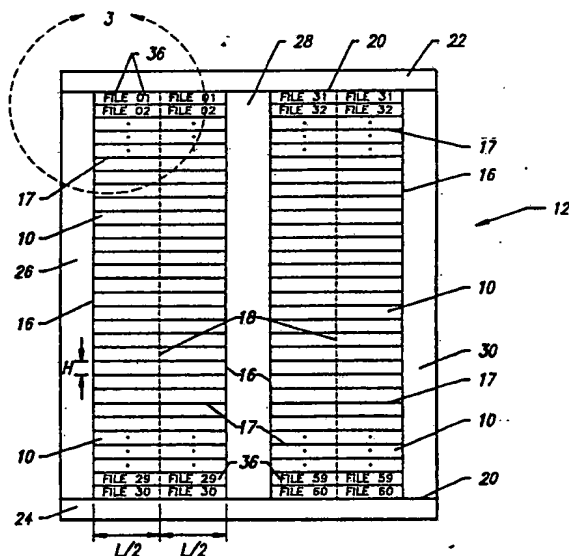
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INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

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(71) Applicant: AVERY DENNISON CORPORATION [US/US]; 150 N. Orange Grove Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91103 (US).		Published With international search report. With amended claims and statement.	
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(54) Title: INDEX TAB ASSEMBLY AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME



(57) Abstract

An index tab assembly (50) formed by inserting an index tab insert (10) with printing (36) thereon into a transparent tab reinforcer (46) attached to a divider sheet (48), file, or the like. A plurality of the tab inserts (10) are fabricated in sheet form (12) separated by perforation lines (17), and the sheet (12) of inserts (10) may be used with a typewriter, laser printer, or other printing equipment, to provide printing (36) on the tab inserts. Indicia (36) may be printed on the tab inserts (10) by simply printing the indicia (36) on the tab inserts (10) during a single pass of a sheet (12) of inserts (10) through a laser printer, or other printing equipment. The sheet (12) has a plurality of tear-off strips (22) through (30) which facilitate sending the sheet (12) through the printing equipment. After indicia (36) have been printed on the sheet (12) of the inserts (10), the tab inserts (10) may be separated into individual inserts by pulling the inserts apart at the perforation lines (17) and then folding the inserts along the fold lines (18).

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INDEX TAB ASSEMBLY AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

5 The subject matter of this application is related to the subject matter of application Serial No. 07/668,991, filed March 12, 1991, entitled "INDEX TAB LABEL ASSEMBLY," and assigned to Avery Dennison Corporation, the assignee of the present application.

10 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to index tabs used for notebooks, dividers, files, or the like, and, more particularly, to an index tab label assembly formed by slipping or inserting a tab insert with printing thereon into a tab reinforcer attached to a divider sheet, file, or the like. A plurality of the tab inserts are fabricated in sheet form separated by perforation lines, and the sheet of inserts has tear-off strips which facilitate using the sheet with a typewriter, laser printer, or other printing equipment, to provide printing on the tab inserts.

20 In the past, a variety of methods have been used to make index tabs for divider sheets, or the like. For example, U.S. patent No. 3,425,145, issued to Newton on February 4, 1969, discloses an index tab reinforced by a laminate consisting of Mylar and polyethylene layers of materials. Indicia on the underlying tab may be seen through the transparent laminate materials. Different index tabs are shown on page 243 of the 1988 Catalog of Pifer Office Supply, Inc. Also, a plurality of index inserts in sheet form separated by perforations have been used in the past.

35 However, such index tabs or tab inserts are often pre-printed with indicia thereon, or are difficult to use with, or cannot be used with, printing equipment such as laser printers. As such, there is a need for an index tab assembly which may be easily formed by printing indicia on a tab insert using laser printers or other printing equipment, and then slipping or inserting the tab insert

into a tab reinforcer attached to a divider sheet, file, or the like.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

5 It is an object of this invention to provide an index tab assembly having a tab insert that a person may print indicia on using laser or other printing equipment.

It is another object of this invention to provide an index tab assembly that may be used to make an index tab for
10 a divider sheet, file, or the like.

It is still another object of this invention to provide an index tab assembly that is easy to use and economical to fabricate.

It is still another object of this invention to provide
15 a method of forming an index tab assembly.

These and other objects and advantages are attained by an index tab assembly formed by inserting an index tab insert with printing thereon into a transparent tab reinforcer attached to a divider sheet, file, or the like.
20 A plurality of the tab inserts are fabricated in sheet form separated by perforation lines, and the sheet of inserts may be used with a typewriter, laser printer, or other printing equipment, to provide printing on the tab inserts.

Indicia may be printed on the tab inserts by simply
25 printing the indicia on the tab inserts during a single pass of a sheet of inserts through a laser printer, or other printing equipment. The sheet has a plurality of tear-off strips which facilitate sending the sheet through the printing equipment. After indicia have been printed on the
30 sheet of tab inserts, the tab inserts may be separated into individual inserts by pulling the inserts apart at the perforation lines, and then folding the inserts along fold lines.

In accordance with a specific illustrative embodiment
35 of the index tab assembly, an index tab sheet of card stock material is provided which is at least 8 inches wide and at

least 10 inches long, the sheet includes at least two columns of index tab inserts separated by perforation lines and having a central transverse fold line. The sheet also has continuous unperforated strips extending across the top and bottom of the sheet and along the sides of the sheet in order to facilitate smooth feeding of the sheet through laser or xerographic printers.

The various features of the present invention will be best understood together with further objects and advantages by reference to the following description of the preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a sheet of index tab inserts formed in four columns and separated by perforation lines;

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view of another embodiment of a sheet of index tab inserts also formed in four columns and separated by perforation lines;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged detailed view of the index tab inserts indicated by arrows 3 shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged detailed view of one of the perforation lines indicated by arrows 4 in FIG. 3 showing microperforations and ties used to separate the index tab inserts;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged detailed view of one of the index tab inserts;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of one of the index tab inserts showing how the insert may be folded along a fold line formed by perforations; and

FIG. 7 is a front elevational view of two divider sheets showing how folded index tab inserts may be inserted into tab reinforcers attached to the divider sheets (one of the tab inserts is shown in exploded view).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The following specification taken in conjunction with the drawings sets forth the preferred embodiments of the present invention in such a manner that any person skilled in the art can make and use the invention. The embodiments of the invention disclosed herein are the best modes contemplated by the inventors for carrying out their invention in a commercial environment although it should be understood that various modifications can be accomplished within the parameters of the present invention.

FIGS. 1 and 2 show a plurality of index tab inserts 10 formed as sheets 12 and 14 having perforation lines 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The sheets 12 and 14 of tab inserts 10 are preferably made from card stock material having a thickness or caliper of about 7 mils and a basis weight (for 500 sheets 25" x 38") of about 100 pounds.

Any desirable card stock material, paper material, or other material may be used for sheets 12 and 14 that is capable of being used in printing equipment as discussed below. For example, the card stock material may have a basis weight which varies in a range of from about 50 to about 150 pounds, and a thickness which may be in the range of from about 4 to about 10 mils.

Each index tab insert 10 formed as part of sheet 12 preferably has a length (L) of about 3 inches and a height (H) of about 1/3 or 5/16 inch. In addition, the tab inserts 10 of sheet 14 preferably have a length (L) of about 4 inches and a height (H) of about 1/3 or 5/16 inch. Also, fold (or limited perforation) lines 18 are preferably located about halfway along the length of each tab insert 10. It is important to note that the sizes of the tab inserts 10 may be varied as desired so that any desirable length (L) and height (H) may be used, facilitating use of the inserts with any type of printing equipment.

The width of sheets 12 and 14 is preferably about 8.5 inches so that the sheets may be easily used in a typewriter

or laser printer. However, the width of sheets 12 and 14 may be varied to meet the requirements of any type of printing equipment.

Each of sheets 12 and 14 preferably has horizontal
5 tear-off strips 22 and 24 at the top and bottom thereof, respectively. As such, when sheets 12 and 14 are 11 inches in height and tear-off strips 22 and 24 are 8.5 inches wide and 0.5 inch in height, two columns of 30 tab inserts 10 may be provided by the sheets (or 60 tab inserts 10 per sheet)
10 as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. However, the height of the sheets 12 and 14 may be varied as desired to provide any desirable number of tab inserts 10.

Referring again to FIG. 1, sheet 12 preferably has vertical tear-off strips 26, 28 and 30. When sheet 12 is
15 8.5 inches wide and the tab inserts 10 are 3 inches in length (L), tear-off strips 26, 28 and 30 may be 0.75 inch, 1.0 inch, and 0.75 inch in width, respectively. However, the widths of strips 26, 28 and 30 may be varied as desired, and some or all of the strips may be eliminated if desired.
20 For example, tear-off strip 28 may be eliminated as shown in FIG. 2. In addition, all of the tear-off strips 26, 28 and 30 may be eliminated, if desired, leaving two columns of tab inserts 10 separated by perforation lines 19 (see FIG. 2). Alternatively, either or both of horizontal
25 tear-off strips 22 and 24 may be selectively eliminated, if desired. It is important to note that tear-off strips 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 facilitate sending sheets 12 and 14 through printing equipment.

The embodiment of sheet 1 shown in FIG. 2 preferably
30 has vertical tear-off strips 32 and 34. When sheet 14 is 8.5 inches wide and the tab inserts 10 are 4 inches in length (L), tear-off strips 32 and 34 are each preferably 1/4 inch in width. If desired, strips 32 and 34 may be eliminated, or the widths thereof may be varied. In
35 addition, either or both of horizontal tear-off strips 22 and 24 may be eliminated, if desired.

Indicia 36 may be printed on the index tab inserts 10 using laser or other printing equipment by simply passing either of sheets 12 and 14 through such printing equipment, and printing indicia 36 on the columns of inserts 10 during a single pass through the printing equipment. Indicia 36 are preferably printed on both halves of each tab insert 10 on opposite sides of perforation (or fold) line 18. Alternatively, indicia 36 may also be typed on the tab inserts 10 using a typewriter.

After indicia 36 are printed on the index tab inserts 10, the inserts 10 may be separated from each other by first tearing or separating horizontal tear-off strips 22 and 24 from the sheets 12 and 14 along perforation lines 20, then separating vertical tear-off strips 26, 28, 30, 32 and 34 from the columns of tab inserts 10 along perforation lines 16, and finally separating the tab inserts 10 from each other at perforation lines 17 and 19.

In order to facilitate separation of the index tab inserts 10 from sheets 12 and 14, microperforations 39 are provided along perforation lines 16, 17, 19 and 20 (see FIGS. 3-5). Preferably, about thirty-eight microperforations 39 per inch, or about thirty-eight ties 40 per inch, are used for perforation lines 16, 17, 19 and 20 which allow the tab inserts 10 to be passed through printing equipment in sheet form, while still facilitating separation along the perforation lines as discussed above. The extent of the microperforations 39 along the perforation lines is about 3 or 4 times the extent of the ties 40 in order to facilitate easy manual separation along the perforation lines. However, it is important to note that any desirable number or size of microperforations 39 and ties 40 may be used per inch, so long as easy manual separation may be accomplished.

As shown in FIG. 6, one of the separated index tab inserts 10 may be folded along fold line 18 to provide two equal adjacent halves 42 and 44 on opposite sides of line

18. When folded in half, the tab insert 10 has indicia 36 on both sides thereof. The fold lines 18 may be formed by merely weakening the card or sheet stock or by providing a limited number of perforations along lines 18.

5 For tear lines 16, 17, 19 and 20, it is desired that the perforations be substantially longer than the intermediate ties, to ensure clean separation of the two parts. However, for fold lines 18, the length of the perforations is preferably about equal to or less than the
10 intermediate residual material or ties so that the sheet may be readily folded but will not easily tear along the fold lines. In one workable embodiment, the fold lines included perforations and intermediate ties which were both about 1/32 inch in extent along the fold line.

15 As illustrated in FIG. 7, the folded index tab insert 10 may be slipped or inserted into a tab reinforcer 46 attached to a divider sheet 48 to form an index tab assembly 50. The tab reinforcer 46 may be made out of any transparent material such as Mylar, polyethylene, any
20 plastic material, or the like. After the tab insert 10 has been slipped into the tab reinforcer 46, the indicia 36 on both sides of the insert 10 are visible through the transparent reinforcer.

The index tab assembly 50 may be used for a notebook,
25 file, divider, or the like. It is intended herein that the words "index tab assembly" refer to any index tab product that uses index tab inserts 10 as described above.

The above description discloses the preferred embodiments of the present invention. However, persons of
30 ordinary skill in the art are capable of numerous modifications once taught the principles. For instance, by way of example and not limitation, different sizes or shapes of index tab inserts 10 may be used. Also, indicia 36 may be handwritten, or otherwise, added to the tab inserts 10.
35 In addition, an individual tab insert 10 may be separated into two halves 42 and 44 along fold line 18, providing two

separate half inserts that may be used individually, or together, with a tab reinforcer. Concerning the top and bottom strips 22 and 24 and the side strips 26 and 30, as shown in FIG. 1, instead of the illustrated configuration, the side strips may extend for the length of the sheet, and the top and bottom strips may extend between the side strips. Accordingly, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that changes in form and details may be made to the above-described embodiments without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

WE CLAIM:

1. An index tab sheet for use in laser or xerographic printers, comprising:

5 a sheet of card stock material which is at least 8 inches wide and at least 10 inches long;

said sheet including at least two columns of index tab inserts, said index tab inserts being separated by perforation lines, and each of said index tab inserts having
10 a central transverse fold line;

said sheet having continuous, unperforated strips extending across the top and the bottom thereof in order to facilitate smooth feeding through laser or xerographic printers; and

15 said sheet further having continuous, unperforated side strips extending along the sides of said sheet between the top and bottom continuous, unperforated strips.

2. The index tab sheet of claim 1 wherein said top, bottom, and side continuous, unperforated strips are
20 attached to said sheet at perforation lines.

3. The index tab sheet of claim 2 wherein said perforation lines comprise microperforations and ties.

25

4. The index tab sheet of claim 3 wherein said microperforations extend about 3 times as long as said ties along said perforation lines.

30 5. An index tab product comprising a sheet including at least one column of index tab inserts, said index tab inserts being separated by perforation lines, each of said index tab inserts having a middle fold line at a midpoint thereof dividing said each index tab insert into two equal
35 halves about said middle fold line at said midpoint so that said each index tab insert is adapted to be folded about

said middle fold line in order to fold said each index tab insert in half, said sheet of index tab inserts adapted to be passed through a laser printer and other printing equipment so that indicia may be printed on said index tab inserts by said laser printer and said other printing equipment, said sheet having top and bottom horizontal tear-off strips and vertical tear-off strips in order to facilitate sending said sheet through said laser printer and said other printing equipment, said horizontal and vertical tear-off strips being connected to said sheet by perforation lines.

6. The index tab product of Claim 5 wherein said each index tab insert has said indicia printed on each of said two equal halves thereof.

7. The index tab product of Claim 6 wherein said sheet has two columns of said index tab inserts.

8. The index tab product of Claim 7 wherein said sheet is about 8.5 inches wide and about 11 inches in height.

9. The index tab product of Claim 8 wherein said each index tab insert is about 1/3 inch in height and about 3 inches in length.

10. The index tab product of Claim 8 wherein said each index tab insert is about 1/3 inch in height and about 4 inches in length.

11. The index tab product of Claim 7 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts and connecting said horizontal and vertical tear-off strips to said sheet are formed by microperforations and ties.

12. The index tab product of Claim 11 wher in said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts have about 38 of said microperforations per inch and about 38 of said ties per inch.

5

13. A method of making an index tab assembly, comprising the steps of:

forming a sheet of index tab inserts separated by perforation lines and having tear-off strips connected to said sheet by perforation lines;

passing said sheet in a single pass through a sheet-feed-type printer in order to print indicia on adjacent halves of said index tab inserts;

separating one of said index tab inserts from said sheet at said perforated lines;

folding said one index tab insert in half; and

inserting said one index tab insert into a transparent tab reinforcer attached to another sheet so that said indicia on said one index tab insert is visible from both sides of said another sheet.

14. The method of Claim 13 further comprising the step of attaching said transparent tab reinforcer to said another sheet prior to said inserting step.

25

15. The method of Claim 13 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts comprise microperforations and ties.

16. The method of Claim 13 wherein said another sheet is a divider sheet.

17. The method of Claim 13 wherein said another sheet is used for a file folder.

35

18. The method of Claim 13 wherein said sheet of index tab inserts is made from card stock material.

5 19. The method of Claim 15 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts comprise about 38 microperforations per inch and about 38 ties per inch.

10 20. The method of Claim 13 wherein each of said index tab inserts has a perforation line at a midpoint thereof in order to facilitate folding said index tab inserts in half.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 22 December 1992 (22.12.92);
original claim 2 deleted;
original claims 1,5 and 13 amended;
remaining claims unchanged- (4-pages)]

1. (Amended) An index tab sheet for use in laser or xerographic printers, comprising:

5 a sheet of card stock material which is at least 8 inches wide and at least 10 inches long;

said sheet including at least two columns of index tab inserts, said index tab inserts being separated by perforation lines, and each of said index tab inserts having
10 a central transverse fold line;

said sheet having continuous, unperforated strips extending across the top and the bottom thereof and adapted to facilitate smooth feeding of said sheet through laser or xerographic printers; and

15 said sheet further having continuous, unperforated side strips extending along the sides of said sheet between the top and bottom continuous, unperforated strips and adapted to facilitate smooth feeding through said laser or xerographic printers, said top, bottom and side continuous,
20 unperforated strips being attached to said sheet by perforation lines, and being adapted to facilitate printing upon said index tab inserts in a single pass of said sheet through said laser or xerographic printers.

25 2. (Canceled)

3. The index tab sheet of claim 2 wherein said perforation lines comprise microperforations and ties.

30 4. The index tab sheet of claim 3 wherein said microperforations extend about 3 times as long as said ties along said perforation lines.

5. (Amended) An index tab product comprising a sheet
35 including at least one column of index tab inserts, said index tab inserts being separated by perforation lines, each

midpoint so that said each index tab insert is adapted to be folded about said middle fold line in order to fold said each index tab insert in half, said sheet of index tab inserts adapted to be passed through a laser printer and other printing equipment so that indicia may be printed on said index tab inserts by said laser printer and said other printing equipment, said sheet having top and bottom horizontal tear-off strips and vertical tear-off strips, said strips being adapted to facilitate smooth feeding of said sheet through said laser printer and said other printing equipment, and being adapted to facilitate printing upon said index tab inserts in a single pass of said sheet through said laser printer and said other printing equipment, said horizontal and vertical tear-off strips being connected to said sheet by perforation lines.

6. The index tab product of Claim 5 wherein said each index tab insert has said indicia printed on each of said two equal halves thereof.

7. The index tab product of Claim 6 wherein said sheet has two columns of said index tab inserts.

8. The index tab product of Claim 7 wherein said sheet is about 8.5 inches wide and about 11 inches in height.

9. The index tab product of Claim 8 wherein said each index tab insert is about $1/3$ inch in height and about 3 inches in length.

10. The index tab product of Claim 8 wherein said each index tab insert is about $1/3$ inch in height and about 4 inches in length.

11. The index tab product of Claim 7 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts and connecting said horizontal and vertical tear-off strips to said sheet are formed by microperforations and ties.

5

12. The index tab product of Claim 11 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts have about 38 of said microperforations per inch and about 38 of said ties per inch.

10

13. (Amended) A method of making an index tab assembly, comprising the steps of:

forming a sheet of index tab inserts separated by perforation lines and having tear-off strips on all four sides thereof connected to said sheet by perforation lines;

15 passing said sheet in a single pass through a sheet-feed-type printer in order to print indicia on adjacent halves of said index tab inserts;

separating one of said index tab inserts from said sheet at said perforated lines;

20 folding said one index tab insert in half; and
inserting said one index tab insert into a transparent tab reinforcer attached to another sheet so that said indicia on said one index tab insert is visible from both sides of said another sheet.

25

14. The method of Claim 13 further comprising the step of attaching said transparent tab reinforcer to said another sheet prior to said inserting step.

30

15. The method of Claim 13 wherein said perforation lines separating said index tab inserts comprise microperforations and ties.

35

16. The method of Claim 13 wherein said another sheet is a divider sheet.

17. The method of Claim 13 wherein said another sheet is used for a file folder.

18. The method of Claim 13 wherein said sheet of index
5 tab inserts is made from card stock material.

19. The method of Claim 15 wherein said perforation
lines separating said index tab inserts comprise about 38
microperforations per inch and about 38 ties per inch.
10

20. The method of Claim 13 wherein each of said index
tab inserts has a perforation line at a midpoint thereof in
order to facilitate folding said index tab inserts in half.

In the search report, there were three references which were marked with the letter "Y." These references were three United States Patents identified as "Pitts," "Daley," and "Koehlinger."

Initially, concerning the present invention, it involves the arrangement of index tab sheets which may be readily run through a xerographic copier, or a laser printer, without jamming, as the sheet passes through the relatively tortuous path involved in many of these printers and over and through the heated rollers which fuse the toner. In this regard, if there are significant breaks or imperfections in the sheet which is passing through the copier or printer, the paper may become curled and easily jam the copier or printer.

With regard to Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings, note that the index tabs are located toward the middle of the sheet, and that there are continuous strips both at the top and bottom, and along the full sides of the sheets which are connected by perforations to the index tabs which are located in the center of the sheet. With the continuous strips on the top, bottom and the two sides of the sheets, the full size sheets of index tabs may be passed through the laser printer without problems, and no jamming occurs.

Now, turning to the references, note that the Pitts patent merely shows the index tabs themselves and has no collateral strips on each side and on the top to permit passage through a laser printer or xerographic copier without jamming. On the other hand, the Daley patent has labels which are only held within the peripheral frame by small tabs designated by reference numeral 18 at either end of the label. With this arrangement, the tortuous path through the laser printer or xerographic copier would tend to make the upper and/or lower edges of the labels deflect, so that they would be caught in the printer and cause a jam.

Note that each of the independent claims as now presented call for the strips on the top, bottom and the two sides of the sheet of laserable index tabs and call for these strips to be connected to the main body of the laserable index tabs by perforation. Accordingly, even following the proposed combination of references, the structure, concept, and results achieved by applicant's claimed arrangements are not found in the combined structure.

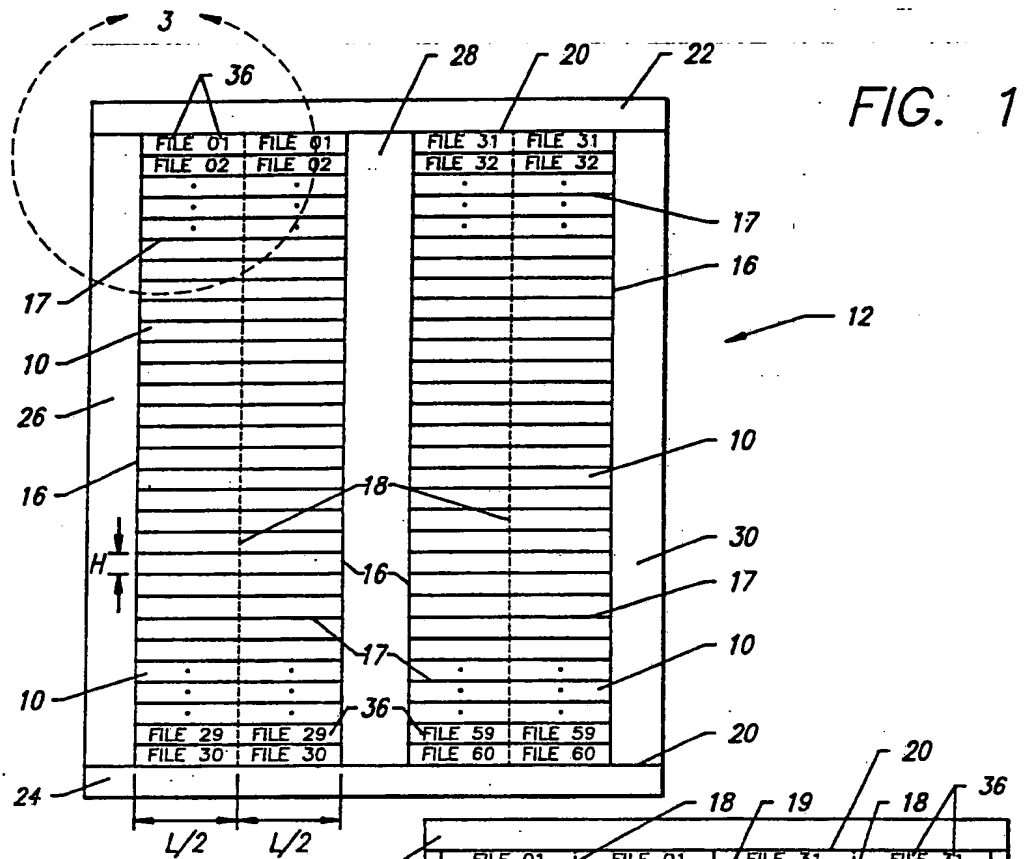
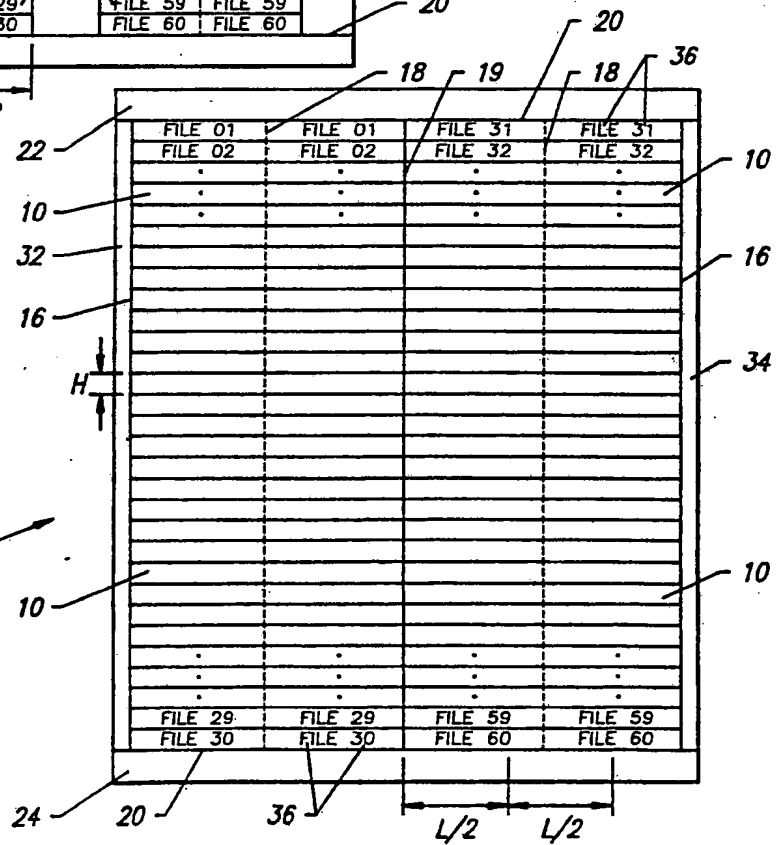
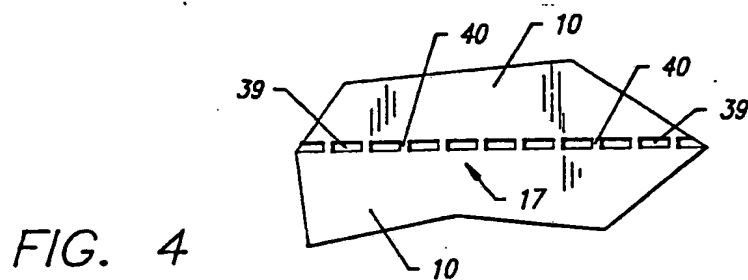
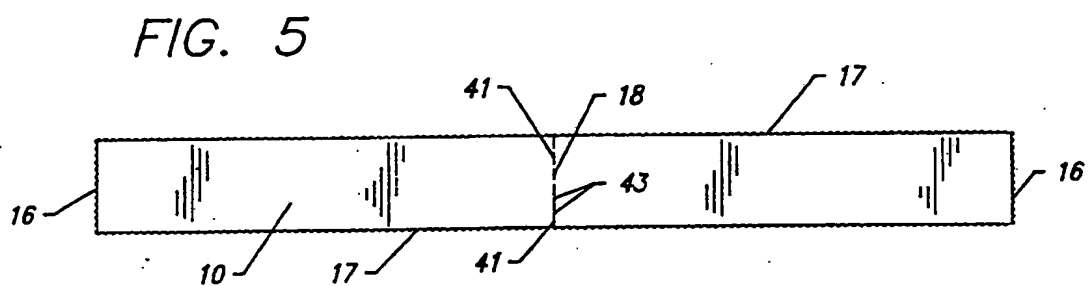
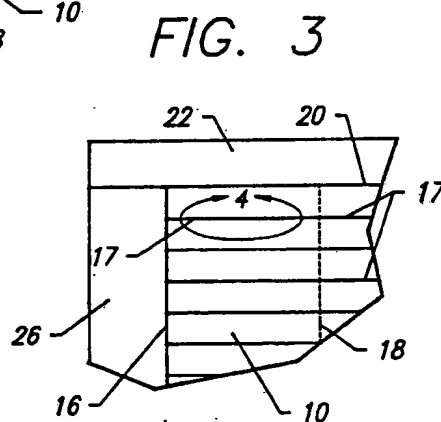
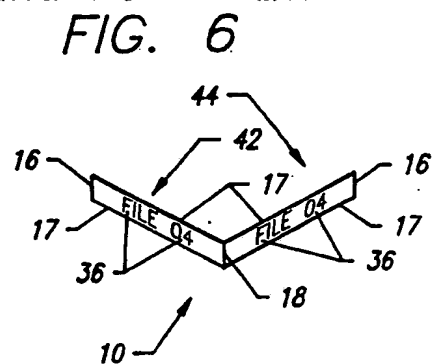
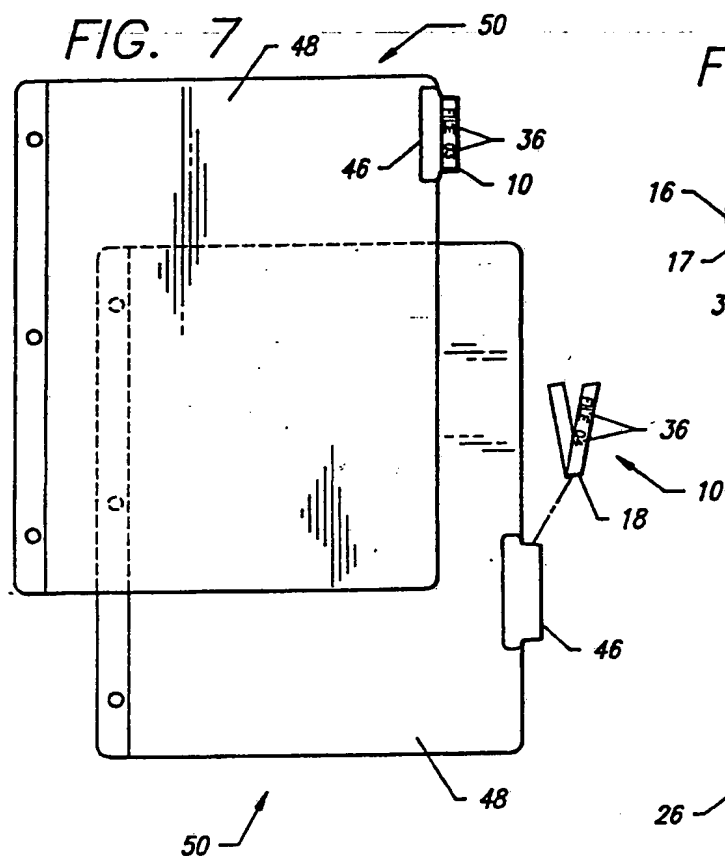


FIG. 2





INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

 International application No.
 PCT/US92/07387

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(5) : B65D 65/28; B42F 21/00; G09F 3/00; B41F 13/58

US CL : Please See Extra Sheet.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification-system-followed-by-classification-symbols)

U.S. : 428/43, 131, 136, 137, 138, 213, 220; 283/36, 37; 40/299, 641, 661, 359, 360, 384, 393; 270/4, 32

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US, A, 4,484,401 (PITTS) 27 NOVEMBER 1984, see Abstract, Fig. 3 and column 2, lines 52-60.	1-20
Y	US, A, 3,807,069 (DALEY) 30 APRIL 1974, see Abstract and Fig. 1.	1, 5-10, 13, 14, 16-17, 18-20
Y	US, A, 3,920,122 (KOEHLINGER) 18 NOVEMBER 1975, see Abstract and column 6, lines 28-32.	2-4, 11-12, 15, 19
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☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.
 ☐ See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

20 OCTOBER 1992

Date of mailing of the international search report

09 NOV 1992

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER:
US CL :

428/43, 131, 136, 137, 138, 213, 220; 283/36, 37; 40/299, 641, 661, 359, 360, 384, 393; 270/4, 32